

# Program evaluation is not as horrible as you think

---

## Making peace with health promotion program evaluation

US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine

# Objectives

- At the conclusion of this presentation, participants should be able to:
  - Describe two ways that health promotion program effectiveness can be measured
  - List three methods that can be used to get follow-up data
  - Discuss two ways that program evaluation can be used to garner and maintain Command support

# What do you think?

Is program evaluation ...

- A. A necessary evil?
- B. An unnecessary evil?
- C. Just plain evil?
- D. Something you do 'when you get a chance?'

---

Program evaluation:

- Is not evil at all
- Does not have to be complicated
- Makes the case so you can get Command support
- Is critical for effective health promotion

“However beautiful the strategy...  
you should occasionally look  
at the results.”

- Winston Churchill

# Why evaluate?

- Determine impact
- Examine outcomes
- Calculate return on investment (ROI)
- Identify areas for improvement
- Sustain Command support

# Where do you start?

“A 52-week, randomized double-blind,  
placebo-controlled, parallel-group,  
multi-center study...”

A PLAN

# Keep it simple

- **Baseline data**
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Improvements based on evaluation

# Data

Data = a piece of information = outcomes

Use data to:

- Evaluate program effectiveness
- Answer the 'so what?' question
- Get Command buy-in
- Write a budget justification
- Use program resources effectively
- Market your program

# What kinds of data can be used?

for program evaluation?

BMI	Glasses of water	Lost duty or training time	Program costs	Movement to a different stage of change
Cholesterol	Servings of fruit/vegetables			
Blood pressure	# of cigarettes/day	Awareness of program materials (posters)	# of visits (ER, physician) Healthcare visits avoided	Attendance at health screenings or classes
Smoker/non-smoker	How often: fast food	Pre-/post-tests	# of steps	
Weight	Dietary supplement use	# meals/day	CO <sub>2</sub> level	Sales in the dining facility
Levels of:  Physical activity Stress	# meals/day	Inches (waist)	ABET	

# All roads should lead to readiness



# Keep it simple

- Baseline data
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Improvements based on evaluation

# Keep it simple

- Baseline data
- Implementation
- **Evaluation**
- Improvements based on evaluation

# Follow-up is always a challenge

## Creative follow-up strategies

Have participants sign a contract.	Use email to get follow-up info.	Use phone calls: cell phones, unit phone #'s.	Give participants a stamped envelope addressed to you.	Go TO the Soldiers – at the unit, at the APFT test site, etc.
Develop a relationship with the 1SGT or another leader in the unit.	Have a reunion day: provide support, a forum for successes, and a chance to get outcomes information.	Divide participants into teams – tag the 'team leader' to get info to you.	Have a contest: the team with the most info back gets a silly prize.	Tell participants at the beginning that you will do follow-up.
Tell participants WHY you want follow-up info.	Sell the idea of follow-up to participants (what's in it for them).	Ask participants the method THEY prefer for follow-up.	Make the follow-up process as easy and convenient as possible.	Schedule follow-up to coincide with another appointment at the MTF.
Ask participants to contact YOU at a specific time (i.e., end of the month)	Give something TO participants when you ask for info (i.e., a recipe in the email asking for follow-	Put a box with a slot outside your office so participants can drop off follow-up info.	Communicate the benefits of providing follow-up info.	Snag past program participants & get follow-up info when they enroll in another

# Keep it simple

- Baseline data
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- **Improvements based on evaluation**



**It's never too late to start collecting data!**

# Data collection & analysis resources

- Local college and graduate students
- Intern resources
- Partner with other MTF personnel

---

- Let participants know you will be collecting follow-up information
- Keep your data organized

# Using evaluation to get Command support

- Command support is critical to program implementation, sustainment, and potential scope of impact.

---

- Know your Commander's priorities.
- Think like a Commander.
- Communicate the value of your activity *for the Commander*.
- Describe exactly how this activity leads to increased force readiness.

# Summary

- **BASELINE DATA**

*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was unformed and void and darkness was on the face of the deep.*

- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM**

*And God said, "Let there be light." And there was light.*

- **EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM**

*And God saw the light, and it was good.*

- **FURTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

*And God divided the light from the darkness.*

# Resources

- Health Promotion and Prevention Initiatives (HPPI) Program web page  
<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/Population/HPPI.aspx>
- CDC Evaluation Working Group  
<http://www.cdc.gov/eval/index.htm>

For more information about the HPPI Program, contact  
[hppi\\_program\\_info@amedd.army.mil](mailto:hppi_program_info@amedd.army.mil)